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1863—1903.

HARRIET LOUISE FORD-CUTLER

A Tribute.

BY

HENRY WILLIAM RANKIN.

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ROM the green slopes of Mount Hermon, like a beam of light, to the amaranthine fields of heaven sped the beautiful spirit whose flight from us we mourn. Yet, mourning, we rejoice; for the loveliness of that life now parted from us for a little time at once deepens and glorifies our grief. The queen of Mount Hermon, the crown of her husband, the light of her children, the charm of her friends is gone—fled to the bosom of that Saviour in the faith of whom she lived and shed her benignant radiance over us. And our consolation is in him alone who has taken her away, and in whose manifest presence she has rest.

Mrs. Harriet Louise Ford Cutler was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, January 10, 1863. She was graduated at Wellesley College in the class of '84; was married to Henry F. Cutler,

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July 23, 1890; and died at Mount Hermon, June 1, 1903. When, in 1884, the founder of Mount Hermon School determined to change its original plan to meet its present ends he immediately looked for a teacher with whom to start the work on its new lines. He wanted one of exceptional fitness in point of training and of character. Miss Harriet L. Ford had just been graduated then at Wellesley College, one of the youngest, most scholarly, and most admirable members of her class. By a classmate she was commended with great favor to the notice of Mr. Moody, and she accepted the new position at the latter's personal request. From that time to the present, saving an absence of two years, she was identified with Mount Hermon; and into the foundation and development of this unique and fruitful enterprise in education have gone all her ideals and work and life. Not indeed that her ideals alone were followed, or have all been reached, but for nineteen years they have been continually operative in shaping the good results that now appear. After the beginning of her domestic cares, few of the students ever came to know her

so well as many did while she was teaching. But all the more, as wife and mother, by the side of the honored Principal, was she the center of gracious activities and counsels by which all the interests of the school have been advanced and its benefits extended. To such a degree she was herself the visible ideal of woman, teacher, wife, mother, and friend, that all who knew her quickly owned the spell.

The classical instruction of Mount Hermon she first organized into a graded course, and during four years the classes in Greek were wholly in her care. But from time to time she taught some other branches, either in the class room or in private; and it soon appeared that every study covered by the curriculum of her own schooling she could handle in an effective and inspiring way. She maintained a standard of thorough scholarship with the most intelligent interpretation of her text and theme, and a rare adaptation to the differing minds of her pupils. And all the time this fair girl-graduate so carried herself before those grown young men and boys as to command their utmost loyalty and respect. She com-

bined a dignity too real to be abused with an approachability too generous to be distrusted, an interest in them too sincere and honorable to go unanswered with a deportment too guileless for the least reproach, a decision that yielded only to sound reason with a grace that put all company at ease. She had manners of perfect self-command, expressing in every aspect, act and word the refinement of liberal culture in which from a child she had been bred, and the unselfish thought of others which plainly marked her springs of character; for withal she exhibited an unfeigned and unmistakable Christian faith, informing and determining the aims of her efforts and plans. Soon the students found in her a friend whose wisdom and good-will they could trust; one admiring and forwarding in them all that was good, recognizing every just ambition, feeling with them in disappointment and need, and by her very presence rebuking whatever was ignoble in their lives.

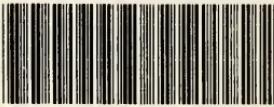
But not only was she all this to the boys. For during those first years the school underwent a rapid growth and change; and

trials, almost forgotten now, strongly tested the coherence of its organization, and the temper and fellowship of its faculty. Then no member of that faculty was more a help in promoting peace, coöperation, and good work. No other more entirely enjoyed the confidence of her associates; while from first to last Mr. D. L. Moody placed upon her efficiency and judgment an exceptional and well-merited dependence.

In the summer of 1888 her need of rest and study took her for a year to Europe. In September, 1889, she became the teacher of Greek and German at the Seminary, and executive head of East Hall. All that she had been to the teachers and boys of Mount Hermon she now became to the teachers and girls of Northfield. Here again she proved the faithful friend of all whom she could serve. Her firm yet gentle ways and words, and strong example, inspired admiration and affection beyond most, and a sense of great obligation for the incentives and instruction she supplied. In full charge of a house with sixty inmates, she also proved to be as good an executive as teacher.

In 1890 she was married to Henry F. Cutler, who in September of that year became the principal of Mount Hermon School. Symmetrical, fragrant, rich, her life had been as child and woman; but never quite so lovely and complete as when a wife beloved, and the joyful mother of children, in the maturity of her experience and strength. For she grew in beauty with the years, both outward and inward; and the intellectual cast of her almost Grecian countenance became more luminous with Christian grace. Then as the fruitful vine of Hebrew blessing, with all her little ones like olive plants about her table, exceedingly happy, and her cup running full, yet not centered in herself, she was more than ever the friend and helper of many.

Happy are those children who have the memory of a mother like this, though she be taken from them for a season! Happy is the husband who once had such a wife, though they be parted for a time! Happy the aged mother who survives to anticipate reunion with this daughter, one reflecting so great honor on her parents! Happy are all they who have the heritage of her sweet



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and noble friendship; for this was an immortal gift they still may claim! And happy are the schools that are dowered with so priceless a tradition and ideal! For such a woman shows, as Beatrice to Dante, what Paradise may be like; yes, what rude earth shall be when all have learned to live by her exalted principles and faith.

How shall we learn? By putting a like trust in her Redeemer; who is the center of the moral universe, the life and the light of men. For according to our confidence in the most trustworthy being who ever appeared to our race do we become identified with the interests and ideals that are represented for humanity in him; comprehending every department of our nature, and every stage of our existence, whether in this world or any other. Well was it said by a prophet of these latter days, and with more significance than he designed: "The problem of restoring to the world original and eternal beauty is solved by the redemption of the soul."\*

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\* R. W. Emerson in *Nature*, 1836.

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